THE TESTIMONY OF THE KING OF MARTYRS

CONCERNING HIS KINGDOM,

Jo. xviii. 36, 37.

Explained, and illuſtrated in SCRIPTURE LIGHT.

By JOHN GLAS,
Late MINISTER of the GOSPEL at DUNDEE.

A NEW EDITION.

WITH A

PREFACE,

By ROBERT FERRIER,
Late MINISTER at LARGO.

Giving a hiſtory of the controverſy, in which Mr GLAS was engaged; and a view likewiſe, of Mr FERRIER'S motives for leaving the eſtabliſhed Church of Scotland, and cleaving to Mr Glas, and the Churches of Chriſt in connection with him.

JOHN i. 46.---*Come and ſee.*

REV. xvi. 10.---*And the fifth angel poured out his vial on the ſeat of the beaſt, and his kingdom was full of darkneſs, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.*

REV. xix. 10.---*The teſtimony of Jeſus, is the ſpirit of prophecy.*

EDINBURGH:
Printed for WILLIAM COKE Bookſeller in Leith; R. MORISON Perth; DA. BUCHANNAN Montroſe; Jo. BOOSEY King's-ſtreet, Cheapſide, and THO. VERNOR St Michael's Alley, Cornhill, London.

M.DCC.LXXVII.

W. Musgrave.

TO THE

PUBLIC.

SHOULD it be thought, that in the following Preface, the Author hath entered too minutely into circumſtances reſpecting himſelf, his anſwer is:---As the ſteps which he was obliged to take, have made ſome noiſe in this country, and various interpretations have been put upon them, he thinks it incumbent upon him to embrace this opportunity of laying open his motives to all who pleaſe to read them; and tho' by moſt of thoſe, he doubts not he will be treated with ridicule and contempt; yet this in no reſpect moves him,---truſting that he has the word of God in ſupport of what he has done, he bluſhes not to own it.

SHOULD it be thought, that he is too warm in ſupport of the cauſe wherein he is now engaged, and the friends with whom he now ſtands, his anſwer is: That as he conſiders this cauſe, to be intimately connected with his deareſt, his eternal intereſts, he thinks he cannot be too earneſtly engaged in ſupporting it; and, in ſupporting it, he thinks himſelf at the ſame time intitled

called upon, to ſpeak in behalf of the friends with whom that cauſe has now connected him, as the time was, when he ſpoke as bitterly againſt them.

FINALLY, ſhould it be thought that he has ſpoken too ſeverely againſt the way of thoſe whom he oppoſes, his anſwer is: That any ſeverity of this kind, has been drawn from him, by what appears to be a diſingenuous conduct on their part, even their pretending to be allies of the doctrine held forth in the following treatiſe, while yet they have been aſhamed to own it; yea, while they have been pouring reproach and contempt upon him who wrote it. The Author thinks he has ſaid nothing againſt them, but what he is well able to ſupport by facts, and what is intended (however they may take it) for their good; nor has he, it will be acknowledged, been his own panegyriſt, more than theirs.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PRE-

PREFACE.

THE first edition of the following treatise, was published in the year 1729, when the Author, on account of maintaining the doctrine therein contained, was pursued by the unremitting blind zeal and rancour of the clergy of both denominations; *i. e.* both by what is called the MODERATE and the WILD party in the church of Scotland. This persecution issued in his being solemnly deposed, first by the Synod of Angus and Mearns, and then by the Commission of the General Assembly, not only from being a Minister of the Church of Scotland, but (as their sentence runs) "FROM BEING A MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST;" when they, at the same time, strictly commanded him, (as the Presbytery and Synod within whose bounds he resided, had again and again done before), not to speak at all, nor teach any more in his name.---A sentence, of which they themselves seem to have been ashamed! for a considerable number of years afterwards, not in consequence of any application from the object of their former persecution, but while he, enjoying the testimony of a good conscience for the part he had acted, was smiling

equally at their frown and at their favour, a General Aſſembly, of their own motion, found it prudent to take off this ſentence IN PART, as they call it, and to reſtore him (for it would ſeem they think themſelves empowered to RESTORE as well as to DEPOSE, tho' we would like to ſee their credentials for both) to be a Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, *but not a Miniſter of the Kirk of Scotland* *.

THE effect of their firſt ſentence, however, was, to deprive Mr Glas of his all in this world;---and ſo firmly maintaining the truth which he had learned from the ſcriptures, and refuſing in the leaſt to yeild it, or to let it be divided, coſt what it would,

" Unſhaken, unſeduced, unterrified,"

he came out from among them, taking his lot with that deſpiſed truth, after the illuſtrious example of him " who chuſed ra-
" ther to ſuffer affliction with the people
" of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures
" of ſin for a ſeaſon; eſteeming the re-
" proach of Chriſt, greater riches than the
" treaſures in Egypt: For he had reſpect
" to the recompence of the reward."

THE

* This in itſelf, by the bye, ſeems to be a tacit, or rather, a pretty open acknowledgment, that there is a diſtinction betwixt a Miniſter of Chriſt, and a Miniſter of the Kirk of Scotland.

The ſpirit of perſecution which then raged againſt him, on all ſides, was ſuch as we cannot have an adequate idea of at preſent; but the juſteſt view of it, is to be gathered from a publication made by Mr Glas at that time, intitled, "A Narrative of the "riſe and progreſs of the controverſy" wherein he was engaged; which every one, I believe, who remembers any thing of theſe tranſactions, will allow to be a faithful account of facts as they happened.— At the time when Mr Glas made this noble ſtand, for the confeſſion witneſſed by Chriſt Jeſus, before Pontius Pilate, it is to be remembered, that the religious world was in a very different ſtate from what it is now. To ſeparate from the eſtabliſhment, was then reckoned the moſt awful, heretical ſtep, that could be conceived; and Mr Glas himſelf, was the firſt in this latter day, who, giving ear to the word of God, in oppoſition to the doctrines and commandments of men, boldly broke that uniformity which antichriſt had eſtabliſhed through this nation, and which the ſecular arm, though not with the rigour of former ages, ſtill ſupported. The courſe which he entered upon, was of conſequence quite new and unbeaten; * he had

 difficulties

* And ſo they would have found it, to their dear experience, had they lived then, and been endowed with

difficulties to encounter, and obſtacles to ſurmount, which they who have entered into his labours, have now no experience of. The torrent of obloquy which ruſhed upon him, on all ſides, in all its force, on account of his ſeparation fron the eſtabliſhment, is greatly abated in its rage now, when various ſeparations from it, on a variety of different grounds, have taken place. Still indeed, all who ſeparate from antichriſt, or any of his branches, really for the ſake of the commandments of God, and the teſtimony of Jeſus, will find that ſcripture, Luk. vi. 22. literally fulfilled in their experience, by men HATING them, SEPARATING them from their company; REPROACHING them, and CASTING OUT THEIR NAMES AS EVIL, for the Son of man's ſake: But he, on account of the bold, uncommon ſtep, which he had taken, in behalf of the faith once delivered to the Saints, the contention for which, (notwithſtanding all the religion that was in the world at this time) was in a great meaſure buried, and forgotten, *he* became in a peculiar manner, like a gazing ſtock to mankind, and a butt to all the enemies of the Truth. At that period too, the *Hereſyhunting* ſpirit, and ſpirit

with courage enough, openly and heartily, to enter on it,—even they, who evidently have availed themſelves ſo much of his writings and his courſe, tho' they have not the honeſty to own it.

rit of perſecution, for which antichriſt has ever been ſo diſtinguiſhed, animated the clergy in a far more violent manner than now, and impelled them to ſhew their malice, and wreck their vengeance openly againſt all who differed from them; *ſo far as the civil power permitted them.* Witneſs, on the one hand, the various inquiſitorial methods taken to make Mr Glas feel the effects of their diſpleaſure, extorting by queries, * confeſſions from himſelf, that they might have to accuſe him; juſt as their foreſathers the chief prieſts, and elders, at Jeruſalem, did to him, whoſe good confeſſion this his ſervant was maintaining; and as their fathers of the inquiſition, in later days, have done. Witneſs on the other hand, the very different methods taken with ſome of us, who have left the eſtabliſhment very lately.—Intreaties to continue in the church, rather than threats of being thruſt out.—Attempts made to ſooth our ſcruples, and ſolve our difficulties, rather than enſnaring queſtions to make us betray and accuſe ourſelves. In the caſe of Mr Glas, the point aimed at was, to draw his ſentiments to light, that their power and reſentment might be exerciſed againſt him. Now-a-days, the point

* See in the above mentioned Narrative 27 queries put to him by the Synod of Angus and Mearns, Aug. 16th, 1728. and the hiſtory of the Proceſs.

point is rather to ſmother ſuch ſentiments as his, to huſh, and to bury every contention about the truth, as much as poſſible; ſo that they have not ſo much as paſſed any ſentence whatever againſt ſome of thoſe who have lately bid adieu to their communion, nor taken the ſmalleſt notice of them, but ſimply received their demiſſions.----What is the reaſon of this change? The reaſon is, that in the former period, the minds of men were more held in chains, as it were, by ſyſtems, eſtabliſhments, human authority, and the influence of ſpiritual guides; but now, the charm in this, as in the other antichriſtian nations, is more broken.----No longer do the people of this country, wonder with the ſame admiration after the beaſt; and no longer has he the ſame power over them as formerly. The Lord has been for a conſiderable time, and daily is, remarkably conſuming the influence and authority of the man of ſin in this, and the other nations under the Chriſtian name, by the word of his mouth, the word of the everlaſting goſpel, publiſhed in their different languages. By it, the uniformity which antichriſt eſtabliſhed, is broken; a ſpirit of free enquiry is gone through the world; the clergy find men no longer ſubmiſſive to their creeds, their confeſſions, their articles or formulas, implicitly led by their nod, or trembling as they once did, at their anathemas. The

bulls

bulls of the Vatican, and excommunications of pariſh prieſts, (to the great grief of both), are now equally ſmiled at, and diſregarded.----And hence it is, that the rulers of the national religious eſtabliſhments, ſee it neceſſary to change their tone, and adopt a different method as to thoſe who diſſent from them.----But to return.

MANY diſagreeable effects, reſpecting his worldly ſituation, did Mr Glas experience, after loſing his living. With reſpect to the clergy's interdicts however, his ſteady anſwer was, * "Whether it is right, "in the ſight of God, to hearken unto *you*, "more than unto GOD, judge ye;"---for he could not but ſpeak the things which he had learned from the ſcriptures:---and what he learned from them, what he firmly maintained, in oppoſition to the received creeds and confeſſions of the age, and the worldly kingdom to Chriſt, which the clergy were at that time ſtriving to ſupport, by national leagues and covenants, was briefly as follows: That in oppoſition to all works, or efforts, or exerciſes, of any kind, either of body or mind, on the part of ſinners, in order to obtain acceptance with God, or juſtification in his ſight; the forgiveneſs and favour of God, was fully obtained for all his church, when Jeſus bowed the head upon

* Acts, iv. 20. 19.

upon the croſs, and cried with a loud voice, IT IS FINISHED; and that this perfect work, which he finiſhed, imputed unto man, is that *alone*, without works, or worth, of any kind whatever, on his part, which juſtifies guilty mortals before the juſt God, and preſents them in his ſight as righteous, and holy, as if they had never ſinned!---That an intereſt in the merit of this work, in order to juſtify ſinners, is not obtained by any labour, or endeavour of theirs whatever, but merely by hearing God, teſtifying in his word, the all-ſufficiency of that work, to juſtify the chief of ſinners; and becoming perſuaded by Him, upon the authority of his word, and through the influence of his Spirit, that what he teſtifies is, and muſt be, infallibly true!--So inſtead of the prolix, and perplexed definitions of faith, current in the religious world, he held faith to be, juſt a belief, or perſuaſion, that the teſtimony of God in the ſcriptures, concerning his Son, is true; and that this faith, or belief, or perſuaſion, even as the juſtifying righteouſneſs believed on, is *wholly* the gift of God; in other words, that it is not of him who willeth, nor of him who runneth, but of God ſhewing mercy, and beſtowing it, according to the good pleaſure of his ſovereignty, upon whom he pleaſes, without reſpect of perſons.

As

As to the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, the following treatiſe fully explains what he held; proving in the ſimpleſt and cleareſt manner, from the ſcriptures, both of the Old Teſtament, and the New, that the kingdom of Chriſt, according to his own teſtimony, is not of this world, but oppoſed to all national earthly kingdoms whatever; that men, (according to John i. 13.) do not become ſons, or children in this kingdom, by blood, or deſcent from religious anceſtors, nor of the will of the fleſh; that is, by any man's own labours, or efforts, or voluntary, uninfluenced choice; nor by the will of man, that is, by human perſuaſion or authority, but WHOLLY OF GOD, thro' the power of his word, in oppoſition to every natural wiſh of the human heart, which, till overcome by that word, is inflexibly bent and fortified againſt this doctrine, biaſſing men in the ſtrongeſt manner, to look for acceptance with God, through their own works or worth: That the members of this kingdom of Chriſt, are gathered into fellowſhip in this world, not by their being born in what is called a Chriſtian country, nor by the influence of the doctrines, and authority of men, or by bonds and covenants, of human compoſition, but merely, by the influence of the word of God upon their conſciences, coming to them, not in word only, but with power, and with the Holy Ghoſt, and with much aſſurance, convincing

vincing them of this truth, That God is well pleaſed in the work of his beloved ſon, and that thro' HIS work, there is hope for the moſt wicked, and worthleſs of mankind:---That therefore, the members of this kingdom, are known to one another, and become connected in fellowſhip, not becauſe of any excellency of character in them above others, even the worſt of mankind; but by profeſſing, and appearing to one another, to be of one heart and one ſoul, as to that truth;---the all-ſufficiency of the divine, the glorious, the eternal worth of Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, to ſave them all; and that ſo ſoon as known to one another, by this good profeſſion, they continue ſtedfaſtly together, proving their unity of faith in this bleſſed truth, by their unity of practice, in obſerving all things whatſoever Chriſt hath commanded, and in a particular manner, his new commandment of Love, in all its branches and fruits, as the great, and diſtinguiſhing evidence to the world, as well as to themſelves, and their brethren, of their being his diſciples; loving one another, even as he their common Lord and Saviour loved them, and gave himſelf for them, and walking cloſely, and literally, in all the footſteps of his firſt flocks.

SETTING out on this footing, (as the following treatiſe, and all his other writtings fully ſhew), and thus, becoming a follower

lower of the firſt churches which in Judea were in Chriſt Jeſus, in their faith, and in their order, Mr Glas was adhered to, as might well be expected, by only a few, and theſe, (like the firſt followers of the ſame doctrine), but of the meaneſt and pooreſt of the people;——and what was ſaid to the Theſſalonians, (1 Theſ. 2. 14.) might juſtly be ſaid of them, "They ſuffered like "things of their own countrymen, even "as the churches of Judea did of the Jews." The doctrine, however, which they held, has, in the midſt of much oppoſition from all quarters, ſpread thro' both Britain and America, ſo that churches, or congregations, have been gathered by it, in both countries, all profeſſing to hold the ſame one truth teſtified from heaven, as the ground of their hope, and to continue unto this day, obſerving whatever Chriſt hath commanded; and however weak, fooliſh, and obſcure, in the eyes of the generality of the world, the following treatiſe may ſeem; yet if I may judge from the teſtimony of many of my own acquaintance, (and theſe not in the above mentioned churches, with whom I have now the comfort to ſtand), this treatiſe has, in the hand of providence, ſerved in a remarkable manner, as a mean, to unſhakle multitudes from the fetters of human authority in religious ſentiments, and turn their attention to what the ſcripture ſays, about the truth concerning Jeſus,

and the nature of his kingdom *; at leaſt, it becometh me, to take this occaſion, publicly to give my ſuffrage in its favour, and own my obligations to it. I acknowledge, that I conſider it, as truly the moſt fortunate circumſtance of my life, that I ever was acquainted with this moſt valuable Author, or his writings:—When I think of *the man*, in every view, and eſpecially in the light wherein I am perſuaded he will appear in the next world, (when this poor buſtling life, with all its vain diſtinctions are for ever over), I have every reaſon, to account the endearing and intimate friendſhip which I experienced from him, as one of the greateſt priviledges I ever attained to.---This is no empty flattery;---it were vain to flatter now! now, when the ſubject of it is far removed, beyond either the cenſure or applauſe of mortals!-- No.--- if the writer of this, knows any thing at all of himſelf, it is the grateful effuſion of a heart big at recollection of ſcenes that are paſt, and of obligations received, which it can never repay. a heart bound, he thinks, by many a tender tye, to pay this laſt, this honeſt tribute to the memory of a man, whom it

* I conſider this treatiſe, juſt as an appeal to the ſcriptures, from all the ſtandards and ſyſtems of men; and the Author wiſhed none to give the leaſt heed either to him or to it, further than they could ſee with their own eyes, ſcriptural authority for whatever was ſaid.

it moſt juſtly and moſt dearly loved.----It will be cold indeed, as to every thing which ought to warm the heart of man, when it becomes indifferent at the remembrance of ſuch a friend.---But I muſt proceed.

When, as a clergyman in the eſtabliſhed Church, I was going on, like others, without enquiry, in the beaten tract, preaching what I had learned from ſyſtems, and writings of men; baptizing every child in my pariſh, whatever the parents were, becauſe it was born in a Chriſtian country; proſtituting the holy Ordinance of the Supper, to every one who was not juſt obnoxious to the civil law, as an atrocious criminal; hugging myſelf in a good living, and thinking all was well;—I was ſtopt ſhort in my career, by a very affecting occurrence, which, tho' it leads into a little deviation, I beg leave to relate.

By a dying brother, a Miniſter of the eſtabliſhed Church too, my conſcience was addreſſed in the moſt ſtriking, pathetic manner, and in words ſo forcible and moving, that they never can depart from my memory.---- With bitter anguiſh, and regret, he lamented, as a dying man, in view of the judgement-ſeat, that he had ſtifled convictions, which he had received from the word of God; and contrary to the dictates of his conſcience, had ſtood connected with

the national Church, in which he was fully convinced the truth concerning the Son of God, which gives hope to ſinners, was not underſtood, nor in any way the bond of their union; becauſe the great evidence of knowing that truth, *viz.* BROTHERLY LOVE, was utterly a ſtranger among them; and becauſe by the very conſtitution of that Church, the commandments of Chriſt could never be practiſed in it.

I WAS not the only perſon, to whom he ſpoke on theſe ſubjects:---A few days before he died, not when in the delirium of a fever, (alledged, I ſuppoſe, to blunt the edge of conviction, as to what he ſaid); but, I maintain it, when as calm, and ſound in judgment, as ever, he ſent for his two colleagues *, and addreſſed them in the very ſame ſtrain wherein he had addreſſed me, freely telling them his own views as to the doctrine and order of the Church of Chriſt, and in the moſt earneſt manner, intreating them to ſearch the ſcriptures, and think how they were acting.---- What uſe they made of this affecting interview

* I acknowledge, I was at that time exceedingly unwilling that he ſhould ſpeak to his colleagues, or to any one, in the ſtrain wherein he ſpoke to me, leſt the matter ſhould ſpread; and I was utterly averſe to have it thought, that he died in the ſentiments of Mr Glas, having then a moſt thorough contempt for himſelf, his ſentiments, and all connected with him.

view, they beſt can tell; but I hope his words, which my conſcience tells me, were the words of truth and ſoberneſs, and which came from a conſcience diſtreſſed at having counteracted what he was recommending to us, may yet have an effect upon them, which they little expect or wiſh for; but, for which, if it takes place, they will, I am well aſſured, ſee cauſe to bleſs the God of Heaven. ---- But to return.

My brother recommended to me this very treatiſe which follows, as that which had at firſt drawn his attention to the ſcriptures, with reſpect to the faith once delivered to ſaints, and the nature of Chriſt's kingdom; and he beg'd me ſoberly, and if poſſible, impartially, to conſider it, comparing it with the Bible, as the only ſtandard of truth.--- An addreſs from the bed of death, in ſuch terms as theſe, and backed with ſuch evidence, as he brought to my view from the ſcriptures, had a ſtrong effect upon me! Not long after I loſt him, I fulfilled his dying requeſt; and I ſpent much time in ſearching the ſcriptures, both of the Old Teſtament and of the New, whether or not theſe things were ſo, as held forth in this treatiſe. The conſequence was; the more I looked into theſe ſcriptures, the more I was convinced that I had never underſtood the goſpel, nor the nature of Chriſt's kingdom.---I had not a moment's peace of

ſcience after that, till I left the kirk of Scotland.---I met with a neighbouring clergyman at this time, exactly difficulted as I was myſelf, and after many a painful ſtruggle to ſit ſtill, if poſſible, where we were, and eat our loaf contentedly; we were obliged to reſign our livings, and bid adieu to the eſtabliſhment: But even then, I could not think of aſſociating with the deſpiſed churches in connection with Mr Glas, and was much ſtrengthned againſt this, by my colleague, who entertained a rooted diſlike at him and them; * in ſo much that when Mr Glas, upon our publiſhing our apology for

* What likewiſe tended not a little to keep me at a diſtance, was the aſperſons which were buſily handed in to me, by ſome with whom I was connected, and who bore a *heart-hatred* to theſe Churches, repreſenting Mr Glas as an arbitrary tyrant, keeping the Churches in chains under his lordly ſway, ſo that they durſt not act but according to his nod.—Juſtice and truth, oblige me to ſay, that I never beheld a character more the oppoſite of this, or one more like the little child, than Mr Glas appeared to me, when acquainted with him. That he was a poor, ſinful, erring mortal, as other men are, is moſt freely acknowledged; but he appeared remarkably taught of God *to tremble at his word;* and to ſhew a noble zeal and indignation againſt all the perverters of the everlaſting goſpel, yea againſt thoſe in fellowſhip with himſelf, tho' his deareſt friends, who appeared walking in pride and ſelf-conceit, or otherwiſe inconſiſtently with the profeſſion which they had made of the name of Jeſus; and hence, I am perſuaded, it was, that he obtained ſo liberally, ſuch epithets as the above,

for leaving the eſtabliſhment*, thinking us of one mind with him, tho' from contempt and diſaffection, we had taken no notice in that publication, of the obligations under which we lay to him; when, I ſay, he, like himſelf, overlooked this neglect, and wrote to me, inviting us to become companions with him, and thoſe connected with him, in the afflictions and conſolations of the goſpel; my colleague refuſed ſo much as to hold a converſation with him.

From time to time, however, I myſelf had interviews with him and his friends, the fruit of every one of which was, that however I braved it out, I was the more knit to the doctrine and order I beheld among them, and my conſcience upbraided me for differing from them; but attachment to the people with whom I was connected, (who I gratefully own, had endeared themſelves to me, by every act of kindneſs within the compaſs of their power,) more than attachment to the word of the living God, ſwayed and influenced my conduct,

above. For my own part, whatever others may ſay, I can truly affirm, that I thought myſelf delivered *from chains*, when delivered from a people, ſplit into diviſions about keeping the commandments of Chriſt; and that I never enjoyed *freedom indeed*, till in connection with theſe Churches.

* Intitled, "The caſe of James Smith late Miniſter at Newburn, and of Robert Ferrier late Miniſter at Largo, truly repreſented, and defended."—Publiſhed in 1768.

duct, till I evidently perceived, that tho' in doctrine ſpeaking very ſound words about the goſpel, and maintaining, *in the ſtrongeſt terms* the neceſſity of the union of the diſciples of Chriſt, as to the obſervance of all his commandments; yet when in different inſtances, they were called upon, to practiſe ſome of the ſimpleſt commandments of the New Teſtament, * that unity was no way inſiſted for; yea, forbearance with thoſe who were not diſpoſed to ſee ſuch commandments, and refuſed obedience to them, was ſtrongly contended for, and actually granted.---- At this rate, I ſaw no difference between my preſent ſituation, and that which I had left in the church of Scotland; only that there, the words were not ſo ſound, and the neglect or abuſe of Chriſt's commandments, more general, glaring, and enormous ---But all his words are equally ſacred and binding;--- and remembering the Lord's awful declaration, as to him who breaketh *one of the leaſt* of theſe commandments, and *teacheth men ſo to do*;----remembering, that there can never be a church of Chriſt, where unity of faith and practice does not take place; otherwiſe, the ancient prophecy and promiſe of God, as to the people of the new covenant, muſt fail; † our Lord's interceſſory

* *Vide* inſtances of ſuch, page 28.

† Jer. xxxii. 39.

terceſſory prayer,* which evidently reſpects his people appearing together in this world, muſt not be heard; and the church of Chriſt muſt have totally changed its conſtitution from what it was at the beginning, when its members were *all of one heart* and *one ſoul*; † and that a church where this unity takes not place, can never be in a capacity to eat the Lord's ſupper as ordained by the Apoſtles; ‡ remembering theſe, and many other things, which were cordially aſſented to, by every ſoul among us, when held forth in the doctrine; and ſeeing now the moſt perverſe reaſonings, and diſputings againſt unity of practice; I conſidered ourſelves as trifling with the commandments of Chriſt, picking and chuſing among them, and diſpenſing (which we had no power to do) with obedience to them, in perſons whom yet we called brethren;---I had therefore no longer peace to continue in this connection;---at this time too, all the convictions which I formerly had, as to ſeeking fellowſhip with the churches connected with Mr Glas, came forcibly into my mind; and as I was convinced from all I had ever ſeen of his writings, and thoſe of his friends, or heard of their church order, that they were conſiſtent in the unity of their practice, with the doctrine as to unity, which they profeſſed to hold; ſuch

* John xvii. 20.—23. † Acts iv. 32.
‡ 1 Cor. xi. 18, 19, 20.

ſuch ſimple words as theſe, appeared to me irreſiſtibly pointing it out as my duty, to ſeek communion with theſe churches, and to walk with them; "Salute the brethren," * "Salute every ſaint in Chriſt Jeſus," †---and many others to the ſame purpoſe.---How I could pretend to be following Chriſt, and yet not walk with thoſe who ſeemed to be his brethren, I could not ſee. I accordingly addreſſed them, and we became one; and my conſcience bears me witneſs, that I have not been diſappointed in my views of them, having for above five years paſt, enjoyed a peace and comfort, to which before I was an utter ſtranger; ſo that when ever I think ſoberly, or in the fear of God, I ſhall certainly account it a greater honour to ſtand as the meaneſt member of theſe churches, who appear to be keeping the commandments of God, and the faith of Jeſus, than to occupy the the moſt conſpicuous ſtation, either for profit or honour among mortals.

SINCE theſe churches, holding the faith and order pointed to in the following treatiſe, were eſtabliſhed, and more particularly of late, various churches, or ſocieties have appeared in different places, ‡ profeſſing

* Col. iv. 15. † Philip. iv. 21.

‡ It is very remarkable however, that tho' one principal characteriſtic of all theſe ſocieties, is a diſaffection to

feſſing in words, to hold the very ſame doctrine, and to obſerve ſomething like the very ſame order with theſe churches, in deſtinction from other religious ſocieties in the world; yea, acknowledging theſe to be churches of Chriſt, and praying for them as ſuch, (which I am certain I have heard ſome of them do;) and yet ſo far are they from regarding theſe ſimple commandments, to ſalute the diſciples of Jeſus, and walk with them; and ſo inconſiſtent are they in their ways, that they not only keep at the greateſt diſtance from them, and ſpeak with as much teeth as the reſt of the world, in the moſt contemptuous manner of them; but they receive with open arms ----they bid God ſpeed unto,--- yea ſeem to ſhew an anxiety to collect together, thoſe whom theſe churches, by the authority of the ſcriptures, have thought themſelves obliged to put away from their communion, as wicked perſons; thus doing them the unkindeſt office in their power, fortifying them in their pride, and counteracting ſo far as they can, the diſcipline of the houſe of God; for which, the perſons themſelves, have in ſeveral inſtances, when they came to be ſober minded, given them little thanks.----And thus do they make

to the churches whoſe doctrine they pretend to hold; and though they ſpeak in quite another ſtrain of one another, than they do of them; yet after many attempts, they cannot agree among themſelves, ſo as to walk together in unity.

make it evident, that the Chriſt whom they ſerve, and the Chriſt whom the churches before mentioned profeſs to ſerve, ſtand ſome way in oppoſition to each other; ſeeing that whom *theſe* put away in the name of Chriſt, as debarred by his law of diſcipline, from ſtanding in his houſe; *they*, in the name of Chriſt too, and upon what grounds they themſelves beſt know, cordially receive.

AFTER all, if the above churches are holding the faith, and keeping the commandments of God, as they profeſs; it muſt be of little moment to them, (who ought to intermeddle with no religious parties), what the others before mentioned are about; nor would they have been noticed here, did not their diſingenuous, and diſhonourable conduct, towards the writings of Mr Glas and his friends, and in particular to the following treatiſe, demand ſome notice; for notwithſtanding all the pretended neglect with which they affect to treat theſe writings, the writer of this is poſitive in affirming, that in their diſcourſes, he has again and again, heard them retailed almoſt *verbatim*. The Hymns and Spiritual Songs, compoſed by the members of the foreſaid churches, and printed for their own uſe: without the leaſt acknowledgment, either public or private, to the perſons concerned, they have taken to pieces,

pieces, tranſpoſed, mutilated dreſſed up, and in ſhort manufactured, juſt as they pleaſed; ſo as in ſeveral inſtances, to make the authors ſpeak differently from what they meant; and in this mangled ſhape, given them forth to the world *. They were at liberty no doubt to compoſe, ſing, and publiſh ten thouſand ſongs to themſelves if they pleaſed; but to uſe ſuch piratical freedoms, with the compoſitions of others, without ever owning thoſe concerned, was ſurely rather indiſcreet.——Another, and ſtill groſſer inſtance of this plagiariſm, is to be ſeen in a ſermon, or eſſay, newly publiſhed, and ſaid to have been preached in St Mary's Chapel, on the late faſt-day appointed by the King.—Any one, who will take the trouble to compare that diſcourſe with the following treatiſe will ſee where the Author has been *gleaning*, or rather from where he has *gathered*, I may boldly affirm, every thing worth mentioning that he ſays; which is juſt part of this treatiſe, thrown out of the ſimple, natural, ſcriptural order, wherein it is written, and dreſs'd up

* In proof of this, ſee a collection of Hymns uſed by a congregational Church in Glaſgow, and another uſed by Mr Scot of Dundee and his adherents, both publiſhed in the year 1773, compared with the collection from which they were taken, intitled "Chriſtian Songs," &c.——Publiſhed firſt in 1749, and republiſhed in three later editions, the laſt in 1775.

in another order and ſtile of his own,—to what advantage the public will judge.—— And yet amidſt the numerous quotations with which he loads his margin, (from Pope Clement XIV. down to the Doctor in divinity of Muſſelburgh), he has not the diſcretion once to acknowledge his obligation to the following treatiſe *.— But not to enlarge upon this ſubject.

FROM what has been ſaid, it will appear, that notwithſtanding all the pretenſions which theſe ſocieties make, as to holding the faith of the Son of God; and notwithſtanding any partial appearances of the ſcripture doctrine and church order which may take place among them; yet that there

* This Author talks very highly, in one paſſage of his diſcourſe, about the neceſſity of *unity* in a church; and tho' I do not think myſelf at preſent called upon, to ſay any thing particularly, either with reſpect to the hiſtory of the *union* of the people with whom he has now connected himſelf, nor with reſpect to what, from my own experience of the ſame courſe which he is now purſuing, I had acceſs to ſee of their *unity*; yet I may be allowed to aſk, — What does this Author mean (page 23. of his Eſſay) by *all the diviſions* of a church being *loſt in the truth, and covered by it?* as ſupported by the quotation of Prov. 10. 12.——I would not willingly miſtake his words, but—does he mean that the *love*, the *fervent love* among the diſciples of Chriſt, mentioned in that paſſage, (explained 1 Pet. 4. 8. and James 5. 19. 20.) burning with zeal for the truth, and for the preſervation of one another in it, as intimately connected with the ſalva-

tion

there is the utmoſt reaſon to ſuſpect there is ſome error at bottom with them as to this faith; for "hereby" ſays the Apoſtle John *, "we do know that we know him, "if we keep his comandments. He who "ſaith, he knoweth him and keepeth not "his commandments, is a liar, and the truth "is not in him;" which manifeſtly ſhews, that we can no further give evidence to our own conſciences, nor to the conſciences of thoſe about us, of our knowing the truth, than in ſo far as we are conforming to it *in all things*, whatſoever Chriſt hath commanded;—Now when, (as in the inſtance already mentioned, where I was perſonally concerned myſelf, and in other inſtances), men appear diſpenſing with the plaineſt commandments of Chriſt; forbearing, for example, in their communion, and calling brethren, thoſe who deny infant baptiſm, who in face of the cleareſt words of our Lord, maintain that it is lawful to lay up treaſures on earth, and to eat blood, and that a church can be walking as a church of Chriſt, and yet not be of one heart, and one ſoul,

tion of their ſouls from death;—does he mean, I ſay, that *this charity* can cover any diviſion oppoſite to the truth, or bear in one called a brother, with any departure from that truth, or from the leaſt of the commandments of Chriſt connected with it?—If ſo, how unmeaning are all his words about unity! and how *ſmoothly* may all iniquity be *covered by the truth!*

* 1 Epiſtle, ii. 3, 4.

both as to the faith and obedience of the Goſpel; I ſay, when men thus appear in practice, how can they in conſiſtency with theſe words of the Apoſtle, be conſidered as holding the ſame faith, which was once delivered to the ſaints? Or, what other concluſion can be drawn, but that there muſt be an error at bottom about that faith, otherwiſe it would produce the ſame uniform effects, the ſame impartial, unreſerved obedience to all Chriſt's words, which it did at the beginning, and which the ſcripture aſſures us it will produce, to the end, in all who truly hold it?

WITH reſpect to the following treatiſe, I may only further obſerve before I conclude, that it is a common thing with ſome of the perſons I have been ſpeaking of, and others, when they talk of it *comparatively* with Mr Glas's other writings, to beſtow great encomiums upon it, while they reflect with great virulence againſt his latter works;—he contradicts they alledge in them, what he ſays in this treatiſe,—and they wiſh when he had finiſhed this, that he had ſtop'd and written no more.—This is a Catholic tract, ſay they; it breathes more charity than the reſt of his writings, and does not *narrow* the communion of *Saints*, (that is in their meaning, well diſpoſed religious people, of all parties, however diſagreeing in faith and practice), but his other works draw the

cord

cord intolerably ſtrait, &c. Theſe inſinuations are equally ungenerous and unjuſt: That there are ſome expreſſions in this tract, which by thoſe who contend for a promiſcuous communion with the world, may be wreſted to their own purpoſe, I ſhall not refuſe; but that there is any thing in it, from which, compared with other parts of the ſame work, it can be fairly inferred, that ſuch promiſcuous communion, or the neglect of the leaſt of the commandments of Chriſt, is encouraged or countenanced more than in the Author's other works, is denied. This tract was indeed publiſhed, as appears by his own preface to it, ſoon after he left the eſtabliſhment, and before he had acceſs, according to the doctrine therein maintained, to experience ſo fully, as he afterwards did in the churches, *how good and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* and how eſſentially neceſſary, the vigorous exerciſe of the diſcipline, in oppoſition to all diviſion, and ſinful forbearance is, for the preſervation of that unity: but there is in this work, the foundation, ſtated from the ſcriptures, upon which every practice, afterwards followed by him, either as to the order or diſcipline of theſe churches proceeds; and in it the Author ſhews moſt clearly, the ſavour and ſpirit of that charity "which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but *rejoiceth with the truth*," as it ſtands oppoſed to that unclean ſpirit called

Catholic

Catholic charity, which the father of iniquity, who was a liar from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, has propagated; and by which the workers of iniquity, receive honour one of another, flatter one another, and rejoice in their iniquity, without regard, yea in direct opposition to the truth, and to the hatred and contempt of all who are of it.

THE cause then, of the affected preference given by many to this, above the author's other works, is not any real difference or inconsistency in the doctrines contained in them, but an enmity, or disaffection to *the practice*, which they have access to see maintained, and connected with these doctrines.----When the gospel was preached at the beginning, the multitudes heard it gladly; but when called upon to deny themselves, take up the cross, and follow Christ, obeying all his commandments without exception; his sayings were too hard for them,---by and by, they were offended.----The young lawyer, heard Jesus patiently, and appeared to agree with all he said, till required to sell all that he had, and lay up treasures in heaven; and then he went away, it is said, very sorry, "for he "was very rich."----That very doctrine against laying up treasures upon earth, which is avowedly, (though there is much more at bottom) one of the main partitions between

tween theſe profeſſed allies to the doctrine of this treatiſe, and the churches beforementioned, parted the Lord, and this young man, for ought we know, eternally.---The following treatiſe, which ſimply lays open the things concerning the kingdom of heaven, I have ſeen patiently read, and profeſſedly admired, by people in the eſtabliſhment,---in the relief way---yea, even by the covenanting ſeceders themſelves---as well as by the people we have been ſpeaking of; but point the ſame perſons to the churches in which theſe things appear carried into practice, agreeably to the literal binding words of ſcripture,---and they will laugh them to ſcorn. But however much the ſtrife among religious parties of all kinds, may be to ſeparate the croſs from the profeſſion of the name of Chriſt; and while ſome are more groſly, and bare-facedly, others more refinedly and ſubtily, dreſſing out a chriſtianity that will flatter religious pride, ſuit the taſte of the world, and draw followers after them; it becomes every church of Chriſt, profeſſing to keep all his commandments, in connection with his teſtimony, to watch carefully againſt all ſuch perverters of the goſpel, remembering that Satan himſelf, is transformed into an angel of light, and therefore, that it is no great thing, if his miniſters alſo, be transformed as the miniſters of righteouſneſs; and while the churches of Chriſt are commanded

ed to turn away from ſuch empty, fruitleſs profeſſors, it deeply concerns them, to think ſeriouſly what *they themſelves* are about, knowing that on no account, in no reſpect whatever, have they any ground to glory over theſe profeſſors, or over the vileſt of mankind; and that if they are taught to hold the teſtimony of Jeſus, as the ground of their hope, and kept contending for that teſtimony, it muſt be wholly by the ſovereign grace and power of him, who died for ſinners, and roſe again, and who prays for his guilty people that their faith fail not.----No reaſon whatever, have they to claim any nearneſs to God, or preference in his ſight, more than the baſeſt of mankind:---when either as churches, or individuals, they review their conduct; inſtead of pretending, (as is falſely ſaid of them) to any thing like perfection, or infallibility, they in every light, find their tranſgreſſions ſtaring them in the face; yea, they ſee themſelves, in many reſpects, far more guilty than ſuch as never have been in a church of Chriſt at all. But the ground, and the *only* ground of hope, which they profeſs to have, is, that there is a fountain ſtill open to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem for ſin, and for uncleanneſs; that if any man ſin, there is an Advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUS ONE, who is alſo the propitiation,----and his blood cleanſeth from *all* ſin.

To

To conclude,---that the following appeal to the ſcriptures, reſpecting the teſtimony, and kingdom of the Lord Jeſus, may be more and more bleſt by Him, the great Head of the Church, as a mean, to turn the attention of men, to theſe ſacred oracles, the ſole ſtandard by which all doctrines and opinions ought to be tried; and ſo as a mean to gather the elect, from among all ſorts and parties of men, to the profeſſion and obedience of the goſpel, that the day of his ſecond coming may be haſtened; is the prayer of

ROBERT FERRIER.

ERRATA.

Page.	Line.	
7.	28.	For *hedge* read *pledge*.
28.	16.	Place a comma after *mystery*, and delete the comma after *revelation*.
36.	12.	After *Godhead* place a full point thus .---*Such*, &c.
---	16.	For *their* read *his*.
37.	19.	After *beginning* delete the point, and place a comma---that, *&c.*
43.	27.	Delete comma after *Jews*, and place it after *believed*.
67.	2.	For *Job* read *John*.
---	12.	Point after *Jews*.---We, *&c.*
74.	18.	For *tibs* read *this*.
89.	1	For *spoke* read *spoak*.
106.	7.	For *He* read *It*.
110.	16.	For *Godhead* read *God*.
112.	17.	Delete comma after *mansions*, and for *their* read *there*, placing a comma after it.
123.	17.	Delete *made*.
157.	5.	Delete *and*.
173.	13.	For *bid* read *hide*.
296.	7.	Supply *it*.
205.	17.	For *suitable* read *subtle*.
237.	5.	For *this instance* read *these instances*.
238.	23.	For *abid* read *abide*.
248.	29.	Supply *is*.
262.	34.	For *prince* read *Thus*.

N. B. The Reader will please to correct the above *errata* before perusing the book.

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